

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-14 are pending. Claims 1-14 stand rejected. By the response claims 1-5, 7 and 9-10 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1-14 are presented for reconsideration.

Objection to the Abstract

The abstract is objected to because of length. Applicants attach hereto an amended abstract having a lengthy of no more than 150 words. Applicants respectfully request therefore that the objection to the abstract be withdrawn.

Rejections Under 35 USC §102

The Office Action sets forth at page 2, "Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Miller (4,877,487)." Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

Applicants' invention as recited in claim 1, as amended, includes features neither disclose not suggested my Miller, namely:

feature a)

... at least one ironing roller supported and guided to rotate about a fixed geometric axis on a frame and fitted with heating means to heat its surface ...

feature b)

... at least one floating pressure roller arranged in a rotating fashion on said frame, said pressure roller being parallel to said ironing roller and in contact therewith providing an ironing pressure on the clothing articles that pass between the ironing roller and the floating pressure roller rotating in opposite directions ...

feature c)

... at least one endless belt mounted on a plurality of satellite rollers placed around the ironing roller and gripping an angular portion of the ironing roller in order to accompany the clothing articles maintaining them in contact with the ironing roller ...

feature d)

... drive means to rotate the ironing roller and/or circulate said endless belt ...

feature e)

... a pair of first inclined planes mounted in a static manner on the frame and against which axial journals extending from opposite ends of the floating pressure roller or rolling elements installed on said axial journals are movably supported when the floating pressure roller is in contact with the ironing roller ...

feature f)

... said first inclined planes form an angle with respect to an imaginary plane tangential to the ironing roller and the floating pressure roller along a line of mutual contact, said angle having a value and said inclined plains being located in a position with regard to said ironing roller axis so that the floating pressure roller is wedged by gravity between said first inclined planes and the ironing roller, and an ironing force component exerted by the floating pressure roller against the ironing roller derived from a weight of the floating pressure roller is greater than said weight of the floating pressure roller. (Emphasis added).

These features are described throughout applicants' specification as originally filed.

Concerning the quoted '487 patent, as per feature a), only the embodiments described in relation to Figs. 2, 9, 10, 11 and 16 in the Miller patent include an ironing

roller supported and guided on a frame to rotate about a geometric axis whose position is fixed with respect to the frame.

As per feature b) all the embodiments described in relation to Figs. 2, 9, 10, 11 and 16 in Miller including the feature a) further include at least one pressure roller.

As per feature c), among the mentioned embodiments in Miller including the features a) and b), only the embodiments described in relation to Figs. 9, 10 and 11 include a pressure roller not gripped by an endless belt.

As per feature d), all the embodiments described in relation to Figs. 9, 10 and 11 in Miller including the features a), b) and c) further include drive means to rotate the ironing roller and/or circulate said endless belts.

As per features e) and f), none of the mentioned embodiments in Miller including the features a), b), c) and d), or the generic description/concept of '487 patent further include fixed inclined planes on which axial journals extending from opposite ends of the pressure roller or rolling elements mounted to said axis journals are movably supported, said pressure roller being wedged by gravity between first inclined planes and the ironing roller.

Figs. 1-8, 12 and 13 of Miller show a floating ironing roller supported at least partially by gravity on two nip rolls. Miller does not disclose or suggest, however, a wedge effect produced by the nip rolls to enhance an ironing force component exerted by the floating ironing roller against the nip rolls derived from a weight of the floating ironing roller up to be greater than said weight of the floating ironing roller, assuming that the endless belt and any thrusting device other than gravity are not present.

In the embodiments described in relation with Figs. 1-8, 12 and 13 of Miller, the ironing force component applied by the floating ironing roller against each nip roll is less than the sum of forces applied to the ironing roller, namely the weight of the ironing roller, the tension of the endless belt and the thrust provided by thrusting rolls, if any.

Therefore, Miller does not teach an ironing machine including all the features stated in claim 1 of the present application. Accordingly, claim 1 is not subject to rejection as

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being anticipated by Miller. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-12 depend upon claim 1 and, thus, are likewise not subject to rejection for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Rejections Under 35 USC §103

The Office Action sets forth at page 4, "Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller in view of Krauss et al. (4,434,566)." Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims for the reasons set forth below.

The Office readily admits "Miller does not suggest providing multiple or modular pressing machines in series connected to each other but formed with independent structures." The Office relies on Krauss for these features. Although applicants do not necessarily agree with the Office's interpretation of Krauss, they note, however, that Krauss fails to make up for the deficiencies of Miller as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Accordingly, at least because claims 13 and 14 depend upon allowable claim 1, they are likewise not subject to rejection as being unpatentable over Miller in view of Krauss. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

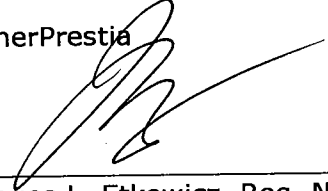
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In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicants submit that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

RatnerPrestia



Jacques L. Etkowicz, Reg. No. 41,738
Attorney for Applicants

JLE/ap

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P.O. Box 980
Valley Forge, PA 19482
(610) 407-0700

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